



The Sawtooths.



Magdalena Railroad Depot.



Example of troughs installed by the CCC. Located at Datil Well Campground.



The stockyards, destination for untold thousands of head of cattle and sheep, as they appear today.



Antelope at "Home On The Range," Plains of San Agustin.



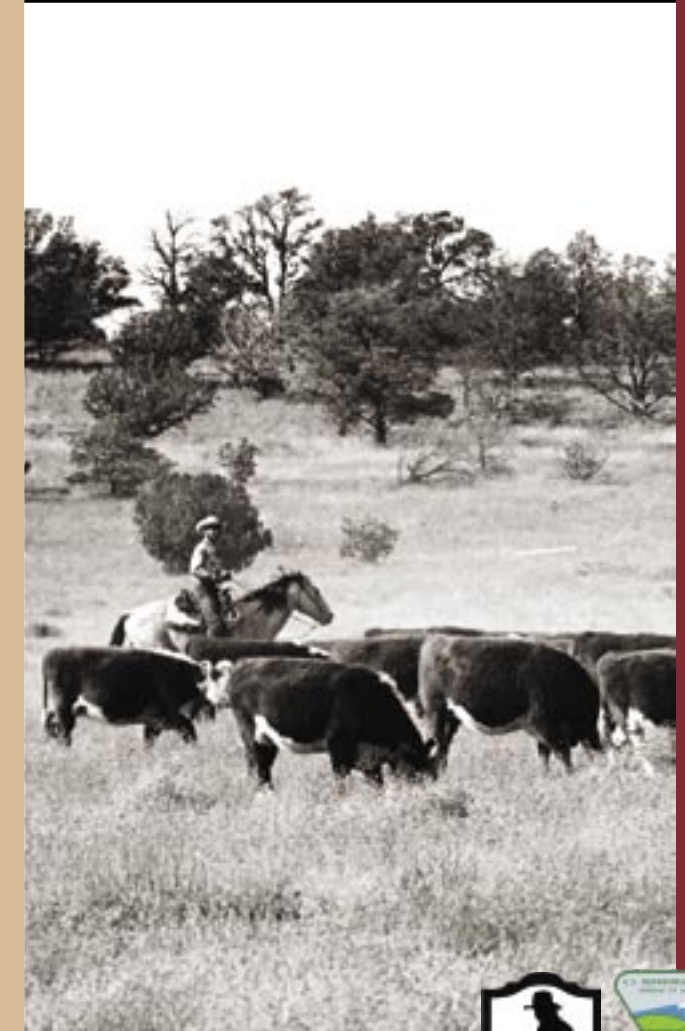
Quemado's Sacred Heart Church built in the 1930's.



Leave No Trace: Plan ahead and prepare - Travel and camp on durable surfaces - Dispose of waste properly - Leave what you find - Minimize campfire impacts - Respect wildlife - Be considerate of other visitors.

# THE MAGDALENA TRAIL

A LIVESTOCK DRIVEWAY



historic and scenic trail



*The Magdalena Trail ranks in importance with the famous Chisum and Goodnight-Loving Trails. What sets it apart is its continued use into the 1970's.*



Magdalena Stockyards circa 1885.

THE BEGINNING . . . The livestock trail began in January of 1885 when the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad completed its branch line from Socorro to Magdalena. Ranchers from a vast area of western New Mexico and Eastern Arizona began driving their cattle and sheep to the Magdalena Railhead, a journey of over 120 miles for some herds. The peak trailing year was in 1919, when 150,000 sheep and 21,677 cattle made the trip on the Magdalena Trail.

In 1916 the Enlarged Stock Grazing Homestead Act was passed, allowing much larger homestead claims. Stockmen were concerned that the expanding claims would block the Trail, so they petitioned the Secretary of the Interior for formal withdrawal of lands for moving livestock to the railhead at Magdalena, and from summer to winter range. This withdrawal under the Enlarged Stock Grazing Homestead Act designated the Magdalena Trail as a “Stock Driveway,” and most accounts refer to the trail as the “Magdalena Stock Driveway” after this designation in 1918. The driveway was the third designated in New Mexico and the ninth in the nation.

The Driveway was five to ten miles wide in places so that enough forage would be available for trailing herds. It was open range, however, and was often overused by adjoining ranches or lingering trail herds. Because of the great distances traveled and the lack of adequate forage, livestock often arrived in Magdalena in poor condition, resulting in a reduced sales price for producers.

In the 1930's, drought and overgrazing threatened to reduce western rangelands to a dustbowl. In response, the Taylor Grazing Act was passed in 1934, regulating grazing for the first time through permits and establishing the Division of Grazing. In 1939 the Division of Grazing was renamed the U.S. Grazing Service. Then, in 1946, the Grazing Service was merged with the General Land Office, or GLO, to form the Bureau of Land Management, or BLM.

The Taylor Grazing Act outlined a cooperative approach to grazing administration which led to the formation of the Magdalena Stock Driveway Committee in 1936. The group was made up of livestock growers and government officials. They considered many issues including the placement of water wells and fences along the Driveway.

THE CCC: In July of 1935, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp DG-42-N was established between Magdalena and Datil in anticipation of work projects to improve the Magdalena Trail, or Stock Driveway. The camp was under the jurisdiction of the Division of Grazing, as indicated by the “DG” in the camp name.



CCC construction of Stock Driveway fence.

The CCC had been established two years earlier as a part of President Roosevelt's “New Deal.” The CCC's purpose was to help conserve natural resources and to provide jobs and training for unemployed young men during the depression. The CCC employed unmarried men between the ages of 17 and 23 who were US citizens. A force about three million strong, they lived in work camps and earned a base pay of \$30 a month, most of which was sent home to their families. The Corps was abolished in 1942.

Wells were installed by the CCC at 10-mile intervals along the Magdalena Trail. Ten miles was considered one day's journey for cattle, and two day's journey for sheep. Once the fences and wells were in, livestock actually gained weight on the trip to Magdalena. In 1956, rancher George Farr described the Driveway trip as “a pleasure as well as profitable.”



Confederate General Henry Hopkins Sibley.

After two decisive Civil War battles occurred in New Mexico in 1862 at Glorieta and Valverde, Confederate General Henry Hopkins Sibley and his ragged, hungry troops passed through this area on their retreat back to Texas.

The war between the US Army and the Apache and Navajo raged for 40 years in Territorial New Mexico, with varying intensity. Much blood was shed on both sides. After the Civil War black troops came west to serve in the frontier army, and some were among those who fought the Apache here. After Victorio and most of the Warm Springs band were slaughtered at Tres Castillos in 1881, Nana went on a revenge raid throughout a vast portion of New Mexico, covering over 3,000 miles on horseback in two months. They eluded their military pursuers for the most part, and won the seven major engagements that did take place. Several of the battles occurred in this area. Nana, who led the raid, was lame in one foot and around 80 years old at the time.



Nana, Warm Spring Apache leader, ca. 1885.

OCEAN TO OCEAN HIGHWAY: Well before Route 66, the Ocean to Ocean Highway spanned the US from Santa Monica, California to Virginia Beach, Virginia. In New Mexico it stretched from Quemado to Clovis. It followed an old wagon road from Springerville, Arizona to Socorro, New Mexico—a road that may go as far back as Kit Carson and the middle 1800s. Modern Highway 60 follows the general route between Socorro and Springerville.

DRIVING TOUR: You can tour the trail via highway 60 from Socorro, New Mexico to Springerville, Arizona or the other way around, as the livestock did.



Highway 60 between Datil and Magdalena.

Chart your own course, exploring as the side roads beckon. Remember in whose footsteps you walk—Native American hunters and villagers, great Apache warriors, a retreating Confederate Army, cowboys, shepherders, and Buffalo Soldiers of the 9th Cavalry. Slow down, get comfortable and think of those who came before. Remember to honor private property rights and federal and state laws as you cross these lands, and please don't move or remove any natural or man-made object from its place in this very special landscape.



Company D, 9th Cavalry as portrayed by The New Buffalo Soldiers.

In the early 1920's, World War I Veteran Mr. Clyde Norman, a Texan who liked to bake, began making dried apple pies at his business on a little rocky ridge on the Ocean to Ocean Highway, later to become U.S. 60. The word got out that the best pies anywhere were to be found in “Pie Town.” You can still satisfy your pie craving at one of two establishments in Pie Town, the Pio-O-Neer Café or the Daily Pie Café.

The Very Large Array, part of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, is one of the world's premier astronomical radio observatories, and consists of 27 radio antennas in a Y-shaped configuration on the Plains of San Agustin. Each antenna is 82 feet in diameter. The data from the antennas are combined electronically to give the resolution of an antenna 22 miles across. A visitor center is just south of Highway 60.



The Pie-O-Neer Café, in Pietown.



Radio Antenna of the Very Large Array.



Eagle Guest Ranch dining room at the Datil crossroads was built around 1900, and has been serving fine hamburgers, steaks and pies ever since.

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